

wanted to go. Most of them are very civilized, particularly hospice care. A hospice makes it very easy for you when you decide to go.

What's interesting is that everybody has his or her own opinion as to how you should go out. All my loved ones became very upset because they thought I should brave it out—which meant more dialysis.

But here is the most important thing: This has been my decision. And it's a healthy one.

The person who was the most supportive at the end was my doctor, Mike Newman. Members of my family, while they didn't want me to go, were supportive, too.

But I'm putting it down on paper, so there should be no question the decision was mine.

I chose to spend my final days in a hospice because it sounded like the most painless way to go, and you don't have to take a lot of stuff with you.

For some reason my mind keeps turning to food. I know I have not eaten all the éclairs I always wanted. In recent months, I have found it hard to go past the Cheesecake Factory without at least having a profiterole and a banana split.

I know it's a rather silly thing at this stage of the game to spend so much time on food. But then again, as life went on and there were fewer and fewer things I could eat, I am now punishing myself for having passed up so many good things earlier in the trip.

I think of a song lyric, "What's it all about, Alfie?" I don't know how well I've done while I was here, but I'd like to think some of my printed works will persevere—at least for three years.

I know it's very egocentric to believe that someone is put on earth for a reason. In my case, I like to think I was. And after this column appears in the paper following my passing, I would like to think it will either wind up on a cereal box top or be repeated every Thanksgiving Day.

So, "What's it all about, Alfie?" is my way of saying goodbye.

DEATHS IN IRAQ

Mr. KENNEDY. Madam President, yesterday morning, January 17, a convoy carrying a staff member of the National Democratic Institute and members of her security team was ambushed in Baghdad.

Andrea Parhamovich, an American citizen, was killed. Three other NDI employees, citizens from Croatia, Hungary, and Iraq, also lost their lives in the attack.

Since June 2003, the National Democratic Institute has been working with Iraqi citizens, outside the Green Zone and at great risk, to help build the foundations on which a true democracy depends. I did not know Ms. Parhamovich, whose life was taken so tragically yesterday. But all of us recognize the ideals which inspired her to undertake such a dangerous mission for her country and the people of Iraq.

I offer my deepest respect and appreciation to her last true measure of devotion to democratic ideals. To her family, and the families of those who were also killed, I offer my deepest condolences.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO LAMESA MARKS-JOHNS

• Mr. BUNNING. Madam President, today I pay tribute to LaMesa Marks-

Johns of Louisville, KY, for being recognized as one of America's top educators in the 2006 Milken Family Foundation National Educator Awards.

The annual Milken Family Foundation National Educator Award was established in 1985, and recipients consist of a network of teachers, principals, and specialists who serve as experts for policymakers seeking to improve the quality of teachers and public education. Award recipients assist in developing comprehensive strategies and policies to ensure that every child receives the highest quality educational experience possible.

Ms. Marks-Johns, a teacher at Shacklette Elementary School, has been recognized by the Milken Family Foundation for her continuing efforts to provide educational experiences in the classroom. She inspires her students to achieve academically and contribute to the community. Ms. Marks-Johns sets an example of leadership for both colleagues and students alike.

I now ask my fellow colleagues to join me in thanking Ms. Marks-Johns for her dedication and commitment to education. In order for our society to continue to advance in the right direction, we must have teachers like LaMesa Marks-Johns in our schools, in our communities, and in our lives. She is Kentucky at its finest.●

RECOGNIZING MR. WILLARD LASSETER

• Mr. CHAMBLISS. Madam President, it is with great pride that today I honor my dear friend and fellow Georgian, Willard Lasseter, who recently completed his 50th year with John Deere's Lasseter Tractor Company, Inc. Willard and I not only share a strong desire for a successful agriculture sector throughout Georgia and the United States, but we also share the same hometown of Moultrie, GA.

Willard began his many years of service to the farmers of Colquitt County in 1945 when he began to work part time for the local John Deere dealership. In 1956, with a little over \$14,000 in borrowed money, Willard purchased a 25 percent share of the John Deere dealership and on December 1, 1956, Lasseter Tractor Company, Inc. had its first day of business. By 1959, Willard, along with help from his father, had secured the remaining shares of the John Deere dealership. The success of the business was almost instantaneous as Lasseter Tractor Company became the No. 1 dealer in terms of sales volume for the Atlanta branch of John Deere dealerships by 1960.

Since its first day of business Lasseter Tractor Company, Inc. has been a model dealership for Deere and Company. Lasseter Tractor Company, Inc.'s many accomplishments include being named to the John Deere's Manager Club for 12 consecutive years, being a John Deere Signature Dealer for top performance in the market place for 5 consecutive years, and being a Gold Star dealer for top performance in commercial products in 2005, 2006,

and 2007. Lasseter Tractor Company, Inc. has also garnered the top market share in the Atlanta branch of dealerships for 3 consecutive years.

Through the years, Lasseter Tractor Company, Inc. has continued to expand and prosper. In the late 1990's Lasseter Tractor Company, Inc. began construction of a state-of-the-art dealership and service facility that encompasses over 45,000 square feet. The service center itself can accommodate over 20 cotton pickers. This is not only an important feature but it is also a necessary feature because Lasseter Tractor Company, Inc., is among the top dealerships for sales and servicing of cotton pickers.

Today's Lasseter Tractor Company, Inc., spans south Georgia with dealerships in three counties. Not only has the business increased in size but also in the number of generations that are now involved in the business. Lasseter Tractor Company, Inc., now includes Willard's son Tony and grandson Judd, who oversee the day-to-day operations of the business. One philosophy that Lasseter Tractor Company, Inc., has maintained throughout its existence is: "You must give your customers the best product at the fairest price possible." This is a philosophy that has allowed the company to continue to meet and exceed the needs of its customers.

It is hard to imagine what the state of agriculture might be in southwest Georgia if that young high school student, Willard Lasseter, did not step into the John Deere dealership in Moultrie, GA, in 1945 to begin working part time.

I am extremely proud of the milestone that Willard has just met and it is my sincere hope that he continues his success in the agribusiness community for many years to come. I want to thank my colleagues for giving me the opportunity to recognize my dear friend Willard Lasseter.●

HONORING THOMAS WATSON BROWN

• Mr. ISAKSON. Madam President, today I mourn the passing and pay tribute to a wonderful Georgian and a personal friend. Thomas Watson Brown passed away on January 13, 2007, leaving a tremendous void in the hearts of all who knew and loved this extraordinary gentleman.

Although he was a longtime resident of Marietta, GA, Tom was actually born here in our Nation's Capital where he attended Saint Alban's School. He graduated magna cum laude from Princeton with a degree in history and served a stint in the U.S. Army. He graduated from Harvard Law School in 1959 and moved to Atlanta where he practiced law until his death.

Although Tom was not originally from Georgia, his family had deep Georgia roots. His great-grandfather was U.S. Senator Tom Watson, who